

Tomato-Coconut Braised Chickpeas

Swick

Serves 2 to 4 | Active Time: 20 minutes | Total Time: 45 minutes

Step 1: Preparing the Base Sauce

- 2 white onions, roughly diced*
- 3 tbsp ginger, roughly minced*
- 6 cloves garlic, roughly minced*
- 4 tbsp shredded coconut
- 1 tbsp ground coriander
- 1 tsp Chili Powder
- 1/2 tsp turmeric
- 2 large tomatoes, diced
- 1/2 cup water

Note: Since the onions, ginger, and garlic will be puréed after they are cooked, they do not have to be perfect.

To cook the base sauce, heat a large fry-pan over medium-high heat. Once hot, add the onions and a good pinch of salt to the pan and dry-sauté for 3 to 5 minutes, or until they start to cook and become translucent. Then add the ginger and garlic and let cook for another minute or so.

Next, add the coconut and spices and let cook for approximately 30 seconds, or until the spices start to release their aroma. Note that for this recipe we have used this Chili Powder, which is a nice balance of flavor, yet it's not overly hot/spicy. If you are using another chili powder, you may need to use more or less, depending on how spicy you like your food.

Lastly, add the tomatoes and stir to evenly combine. Cover the mixture and let cook for 4 to 5 minutes. If the mixture looks too dry at any point, add a touch of water.

To finish the sauce, carefully transfer the tomato mixture to a blender and add the water. Blend until quite smooth and then set aside while you start the rest of the dish.

Step 2: Starting the Dish

- 1 jalapeño, finely minced*
- 1 tsp fennel seeds, or to taste
- 12 to 14 curry leaves, fresh or frozen
- 1½ tsp freshly coarsely ground black pepper, or to taste
- 3 cups cooked chickpeas (2-15 oz cans)*
- 1/2 tsp sea salt, or to taste

Note: For less heat, either remove the seeds and/or use only 1/2 a jalapeño.

Alternatively, the jalapeño can be omitted and a pinch or two of cayenne can be used instead.

To start the dish, heat the same clean frypan over medium heat. Once hot, add the fennel seeds and cook until they become aromatic and start to brown.

Next, add the curry leaves, chickpeas, and black pepper. Carefully stir to combine.

*Alternatively, use half chickpeas and half vegetables (such as cauliflower, potato, peas, etc.)

At this point, add the tomato-coconut sauce and salt to the chickpeas and stir to fully incorporate the sauce. The amount of salt will depend on personal preference, and if, and/or how, salty the cooked chickpeas are.

Cover the fry-pan and let the mixture cook for 15 minutes or so, or until the chickpeas are tender and the sauce begins to thicken nicely. Stirring as needed to prevent sticking and/or burning.

Step 3: Finishing the Dish

- 1/3 cup freshly chopped cilantro
- 1 fresh lemon, cut in half*

To finish the dish, taste and add more salt and/or more freshly ground coarse pepper, if desired. If the sauce is a bit too thick, or if you would simply prefer a thinner sauce, add a touch more water.

Just before serving, add a good squeeze of lemon juice and the fresh cilantro. For the lemon, use half of the sauce and cut the remaining half into wedges and serve alongside the curry, so guests can add more tartness if desired. Serve immediately with basmati rice and pappadums, if desired.